Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations
AIM4Forests
Accelerating Innovative
Monitoring for Forests

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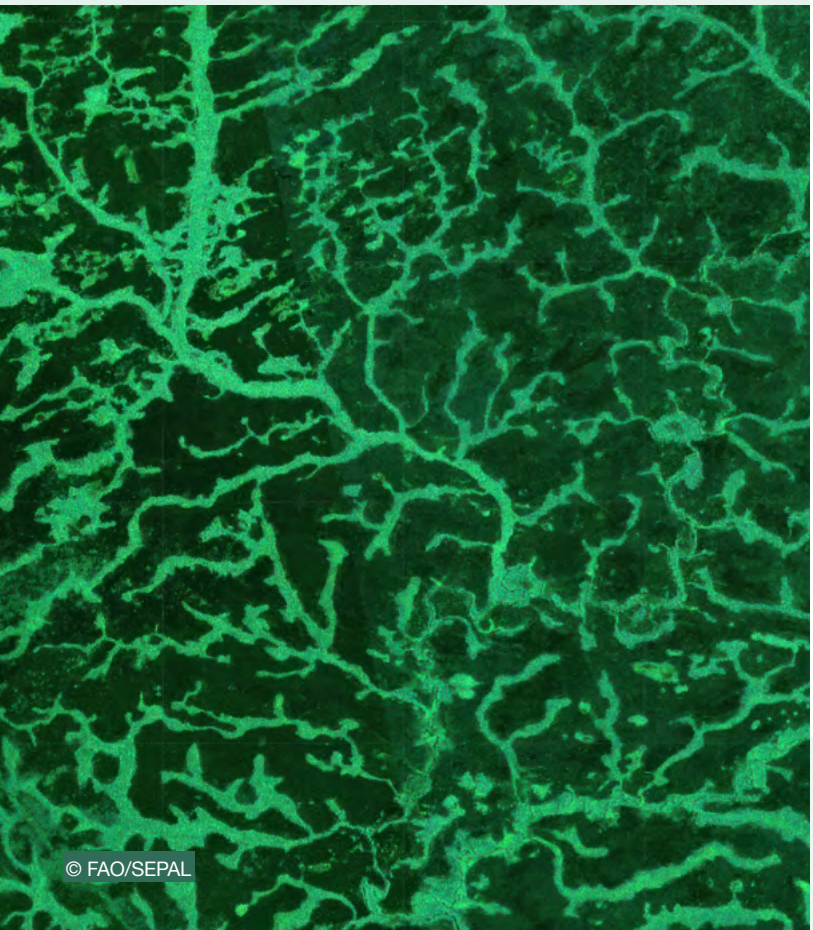
Accelerating Innovative Monitoring for Forests

Reducing deforestation and forest degradation, restoring forests, and sustainably managing forests are all critical pathways to meeting the 2030 global goals.

Since 1990, more than 420 million hectares of forest have disappeared. Although deforestation rates have slowed, 10 million hectares of forest are still lost every year.

World leaders have committed to halting deforestation and restoring more than 1 billion hectares of degraded land. However, progress has been hindered due to the lack of information at various levels:

- those who are responsible for forests, who need accurate data to inform the right course of action to reduce deforestation, as well as implement plans for restoration and sustainable management;
- countries, which urgently need National Forest Monitoring Systems (NFMS) that are institutionalized in government institutions and that deliver high-quality data;
- government institutions, which must provide critical information for domestic forest-related priorities and policies, and emission reductions reporting through measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) processes in order to access climate finance and raise levels of ambition related to international commitments under the Paris Agreement; and
- Indigenous Peoples and local communities, whose role in forest management and conservation is increasingly recognized – AIM4Forests will support efforts for Indigenous Peoples and local communities to monitor their forest areas and explore how their role as forest stewards can be further strengthened.



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Leading the way to more effective forest monitoring

Goals

To address such challenges the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland launched AIM4Forests in 2023. The eight-year programme aims to support forest monitoring based on modern monitoring technologies and technical innovation, as well as the use of space data and remote sensing.

The main goals of AIM4Forests are to:

- monitor forests, land use and nature by integrating the latest technical knowledge, leveraging innovative platforms, strengthening global datasets, and applying good-practice methodologies;
- monitor progress in forests towards greater equity and inclusiveness, ensuring that forest communities, youth, women, smallholders and Indigenous Peoples are empowered to participate; and
- support countries in developing forest monitoring systems that are sustainable, robust, relevant to policy priorities and accessible to all.

Driving technical innovation

The programme is all about leveraging technical innovation to create data and information to inform the right courses of action to reduce deforestation and restore forests.

AIM4Forests will leverage everything that technology and innovation offers, such as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning. In addition, it will also make sure that the capacity is transferred to countries, including Indigenous Peoples and local communities who manage the forests the only way we can see real change.

Specific innovations include:

- the continued strengthening of FAO's digital public goods, such as the SEPAL cloud computing platform, as well as the leveraging of AI, machine learning, and the United Kingdom's research and development on remote sensing and space data;
- the programme's leveraging of innovative learning approaches, such as online facilitated courses and self-paced e-learning opportunities;
- the Global Forest Observations Initiative (GFOI) delivering country-led planning processes to assist countries to strengthen NFMS for institutional embedding and long-term sustainability; and
- the programme ensuring that all methods, platforms, and data created under the programme are open, accessible and transparent to all stakeholders.

What we do

AIM4Forests was launched in April 2023. In 2025, the duration of the programme was extended to 2030, and two new outputs were added: Accelerating Innovative Monitoring for Nature Restoration (AIM4NatuRe) and Accelerating Innovative Monitoring for Transparent Commodities (AIM4Commodities).

Some actions carried out under AIM4Forests include:

- developing and disseminating technical solutions, including through e-learning;
- advancing methods, research and datasets for carbon accounting and MRV;
- monitoring nature restoration progress and building a global dataset;
- building digital public infrastructure on transparent commodities;
- supporting Indigenous Peoples-led communities of practice;
- facilitating country-led planning and South–South exchanges; and
- delivering country-level technical assistance.

Impact

AIM4Forests works with 20 countries across Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean to institutionalize their NFMS and provide high-integrity MRV through modern monitoring technologies, novel learning approaches and innovation.

This will enable participation in emerging accounting standards and reduce global emissions from the forest sector, while strengthening agriculture, forestry, and other land-use contributions in national climate action plans to cut emissions and adapt to climate impacts.

Ensuring our forests are restored, protected, managed, and used sustainably will positively impact people and nature, contributing to the battle against climate change.

- **GBP 48.4 million in funding**
- **supporting 20 countries**
- **across the span of eight years** (2023–2030)

Figure 1 AIM4Forests theory of change (2026)

AIM4Forests
Theory of change
IMPACT
GOAL
Transformed resource and land management towards reduced deforestation, more effective nature restoration, and more sustainable commodity production
OUTCOMES
OUR OUTCOMES
Greater financial flows for forest countries and communities
Transformed resource and land management towards reduced deforestation, more effective nature restoration, and more sustainable commodity production
INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES
MILESTONES
Robust and innovative monitoring
Equitable and inclusive forest monitoring
Sustainable national forest monitoring systems
OUTPUTS AND ACTIVITIES
WHAT WE DO
Forest data for better management
Develop and disseminate technical solutions, including through e-learning
Forest measuring, reporting and verification (MRV) methodologies
Advance methods, research and datasets for carbon accounting and MRV
Transparent nature restoration monitoring – AIM4NatuRe
Monitor nature restoration progress and build a global dataset
Transparent commodity supply chains – AIM4Commodities
Build digital public infrastructure on transparent commodities
Forest monitoring for Indigenous Peoples and forest communities
Support Indigenous Peoples-led communities of practice
Country-led planning for institutional embedding – GFOI
Facilitate country-led planning and South–South exchanges
Technical assistance to tropical forest countries
Deliver country-level technical assistance
INTEGRATE YOUTH, WOMEN, SMALLHOLDERS, AND THE RURAL POOR ACROSS ALL ACTIONS
AIM4Forests

Source: FAO. 2026. AIM4Forests Theory of change. Rome. https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd8403en

Main partners

The Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ)
of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

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> Over the last years, Ghana has made strong progress in developing its forest monitoring system, which has been critical for accessing climate finance and supporting the cocoa sector to meet deforestation-related trade requirements. Through AIM4Forests, we are addressing remaining capacity gaps to ensure Ghana's national forest monitoring system delivers robust data for both national priorities and international commitments.

— **Thomas Y. Gyambrah**, Ghana measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) manager, and member of the MTR council

Forest Monitoring and Data Platforms

Contact: AIM4Forests@fao.org

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
Rome, Italy

Discover the impact

AIM4Forests
https://www.fao.org/in-action/aim4forests

Forest Monitoring and Data Platforms
https://www.fao.org/forest-monitoring

Try the tools

Open Foris
https://openforis.org

SEPAL
https://sepal.io

AIM4Forests UK Government

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